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Appl. No. 10/082,674
Amdt. dated October 23, 2006
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 3625

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented): An electronic mail system according to Claim 13, further comprising means for executing an application in bench mark mode, and bench mark means for preventing the utilization charge from being levied for an application executed for not longer than a predetermined time by the user desirous of checking the performance of the application.

Claims 5-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) An electronic mail system, comprising:
an application service provider registration database operable to store information for a plurality of application service providers, utilization charge rates for a plurality of applications provided by the plurality of application service providers, and utilization categories to which the plurality of applications belong;

a reception interface operable to receive an application search request from a user terminal via a network, the application search request specifying one of the utilization categories; and

a processing unit operable to:

search the application service provider registration database based on the utilization category specified in the received application search request;

send information to the user terminal to display a selection screen for selecting at least one of the applications located during the search step;

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execute a first application and store a first execution start time into a first utilization time management file associated with the first application when receiving a first application execution request from the user terminal;

check whether an execution request of any other application is received from the user terminal;

execute a second application and store a second execution start time into a second utilization time management file associated with the second application when receiving a second application execution request from the user terminal;

store a first execution end time for the first application and a second execution end time for the second application into the first and second utilization time management files, respectively, when detecting a ~~disconnection with~~ log out of the user terminal;

calculate a first execution time for the first application from the first execution start time and the first execution end time stored in the first utilization time management file and a second execution time for the second application from the second execution start time and the second execution end time stored in the second utilization time management file;

calculate a utilization charge for each application service provider and a total utilization charge for a user of the user terminal using the first and second execution times and the utilization charge rates in the application service provider registration database; and

perform a settlement process for each application service provider and the user.